Meeting the unmet needs of health infrastructure, health personnel and contraception and providing integrated service delivery for basic reproductive and child health care.

An Empowered Action Group has been constituted under the chairmanship of the Union health and Family Welfare Minister for focused attention on improving the coverage and outreach of services in demographically weaker eight states, including family planning services.

No Scalpel Vasectomy (NSV) method (without a cut or a stitch) of male sterilization has been introduced to promote male participation in family planning programme since 1997.

Treatment of British heart and lung patients in India

48. DR. ALLADI P. RAJKUMAR: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Britain's National Health Service wants to avail of Indian expertise in treatment of British heart and lung patients in India;

(b) whether N.H.S. officials are in India for negotiations with Indian officials to finalize arrangements for sending patients to India for heart surgery and lung ailment treatment; and

(c) by when the scheme is likely to be finalised and put into practice?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI A. RAJA): (a) No, Sir.

(b) and (c) Do not arise.

CGHS facilities in H.P.

49. SHRI ANIL SHARMA: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) the districts in Himachal Pradesh where CGHS facilities are available;

(b) the approved private hospitals in the State where the CGHS beneficiaries can get treatment free of cost;

(c) whether Government have any proposal for allowing the CGHS beneficiaries to get treatment in Civil Hospital, Rohru;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI A. RAJA): (a) CGHS facilities are not available in the State of Himachal Pradesh.

(b) Since Himachal Pradesh is not covered under CGHS, no private hospital has been recognised under CGHS in the State. However, the Central Government employees working in Himachal Pradesh are eligible for medical facilities under the Central Services (Medical Attendance) Rules, 1944.

(c) to (e) As Himachal Pradesh is not covered under CGHS, the question does not arise.

Lung cancer deaths due to smoking

50. SHRI B.J. PANDA: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that smoking is responsible for 90 per cent lung cancer deaths as per WHO;

(b) whether it is also a fact that a total of 240 million smokers are in the country and this epidemic is spreading fast; and

(c) if so, the steps taken by Government to control this menace, specially among children and women?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI A. RAJA): (a) to (c) According to the 1996 data, the proportion of lung cancer deaths due to tobacco smoking was 87% among men and 33.2% among women. A survey conducted in the country in 1998 indicated that the prevalence of smoking was 29.4% among men and 2.5% among women.

The Government has been taking various administrative steps and undertaking IEC activities to regulate and discourage smoking. In this connection, a comprehensive legislation namely the Cigarettes and other